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Final New Return

a study and approval path is defined in said step units relating to the virtual file.

Claim 24 (Withdrawn): The apparatus according to claim 17, wherein
said virtual file can be copied, and simultaneously distributed through a network using a
plurality of paths.

Claims 25 and 26 (Cancelled).

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102(e)

Claim 27 (Currently Amended): An information processing apparatus ~~for accumulating~~
~~technical documents relating to a patent application~~, comprising:

accumulation means for accumulating information about a related prior art document
which has been is cited by the patent office for examining the in a prosecution of a patent
application and a foreign patent application corresponding to the patent application in a first
country and a related prior art document cited in another prosecution of a counterpart patent
application in a second country different from the first country; and

display control means for displaying a list of the related prior art documents of said
patent application and a list of the foreign patent application of corresponding to said patent
application accumulated in said accumulation means in the same window cited in each of the
prosecutions of the patent application in the first country and the counterpart patent application
in the second country.

Claim 28 (Previously Presented): The information processing apparatus according to
claim 27, wherein

said display control means displays a flag indicating whether or not a prior art disclosure procedure has been performed on the prior art document.

Claim 29 (Previously Presented): The information processing apparatus according to claim 27, wherein

said display control means displays descriptions indicating correspondence between the prior art document and a rejection reason.

Claim 30 (Previously Presented): The information processing apparatus according to claim 27, wherein

said display control means displays a list of applications by which the prior art document has been cited relating to the prior art document.

Claim 31 (Currently Amended): An information processing method for accumulating technical documents relating to a patent application, comprising the steps of:

accumulating information about a related prior art document which has been is cited by the patent office for examining the in a prosecution of a patent application and a foreign patent application corresponding to the patent application in a first country and a related prior art document cited in another prosecution of a counterpart patent application in a second country different from the first country; and

displaying and controlling a list of the related prior art documents of said patent application and a list of the foreign patent application of corresponding to said patent application accumulated in said accumulation step in the same window cited in each of the

prosecutions of the patent application in the first country and the counterpart patent application in the second country.

Claim 32 (Currently Amended): A program storage medium storing a program for realizing an information processing method for accumulating prior art documents relating to a patent application, comprising the steps of:

a code for realizing an accumulation step of accumulating information about a related prior art document which has been is cited by the patent office for examining the in the prosecution of a patent application and a foreign patent application corresponding to the patent application in a first country and a related prior art document cited in another prosecution of a counterpart patent application in a second country different from the first country; and

a code for realizing a displaying and controlling a list of the related prior art documents of said patent application and a list of the foreign patent application corresponding to said patent application accumulated in said accumulation step in the same window cited in each of the prosecutions of the patent application in the first country and the counterpart patent application in the second country.

Claim 33 (New) An information processing apparatus according to claim 27, wherein said display means displays country information corresponding to the first and second countries.

Claim 34 (New) An information processing apparatus according to claim 27, wherein said display means displays date information which relate to the obtain date of the first and second prior arts.

Claim 35 (New) An information processing apparatus according to claim 27, wherein
said display means displays the abstract of the first and second prior arts.